



## **CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT**

### **TENTH HENNET ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

**MAY 26<sup>TH</sup> 2015 PAN AFRIC HOTEL**

**“As a network we strengthen civil society’s contribution and  
engagement to the Health sector”**

## **INTRODUCTION**

This is the tenth Health NGOs Network (HENNET) Annual General Meeting (AGM) and a lot of progress has been reported for HENNET activities and the growth of the Network. This AGM focuses on the growth of the Network and the progress in the financial year 2013/2014

It also focuses on the implementation of HENNET's Strategic Plan with a results framework consisting of four strategic result areas in contrast to the 7 areas in the first strategic plan. The four strategic results can only be realized through collective responsibility of HENNET members, HENNET board and HENNET Secretariat. As stakeholders in the implementation of HENNET activities, it is important for members to assess the progress towards the achievement while borrowing heavily from past experiences and lessons learnt to inform future implementation as we move into the new year and other phases to come. It also discusses progress in HENNET as an institution.

## **HENNET'S PROGRESS IN 2013/2014**

### **a) Organization and Management**

HENNET is governed by a Board of 11 elected member organisations. The board comprises of a chairperson, vice chairperson, secretary, treasurer (these compose the steering committee) and an additional seven members. The Board has continued to oversee the operations of the HENNET secretariat as stipulated in HENNET's constitution. The HENNET board continues to meet on a quarterly basis to advise and monitor the implementation of HENNET activities.

The composition of the current HENNET board is as follows;

- 1) Kenya Red Cross Society – Board Chair
- 2) APDK – Vice Chair
- 3) MILDMAY – Treasurer
- 4) I Choose Life – Secretary
- 5) GOAL – Member
- 6) Kenya National Alliance Against Malaria (KeNAAM) – Member
- 7) JHPiego – Member
- 8) World Vision - Member
- 9) Marie Stopes – Member
- 10) AMREF –Member
- 11) Aga Khan -Member

This year marks the end of the four year term of 2 HENNET board members while the other Board members are still eligible for re-election. Those retiring are Kenya Red Cross (Chair) and Mildmay (Treasurer). This therefore means that by the end of the day, we will have new

members in the HENNET Board that will ensure HENNET continues to be a strong and credible network.

HENNET continues to gain recognition and respect among all key stakeholders in the health sector and this is shown by the fact that the secretariat and various HENNET members currently sit in various technical committees at the Ministry of Health. To sustain credibility, the HENNET board has continued to be strict in reviewing membership applications to HENNET and only approving them based on the agreed upon criteria. Each member is responsible for ensuring that HENNET has the up-to-date organizations' annual report, constitution/legal documents and audited report. Proper governance and accountability in our various organizations ensures that our mandate of a healthy Kenyan society can be achieved. We should all be accountable to the populations and communities that we serve as well as be accountable to the partners that fund our operations.

The Health NGOs Network has continued to work towards bringing all CSOs operating in the health sector under one umbrella. This initiative is aimed at ensuring that organizations with diverse backgrounds (National, International organizations and even local Community Based Organizations(CBOs) are brought together for the purpose of working towards achieving a common objective of **“As a network we strengthen civil society’s contribution and engagement to the Health sector”**.

In an effort to meet this objective, the Secretariat has continued to recruit new members into the network. We also appreciate the work of HENNET members in referring potential members to the secretariat for eligibility screening and possible recruitment into the network. Newly recruited members are taken through an important orientation exercise during which expectations of both the members and the Secretariat are clarified.

## **HENNET AREAS OF FOCUS IN 2013/2014 FINANCIAL YEAR**

In a continued effort to fulfill its mandate of stimulating linkages and creating strategic partnerships among non – governmental organizations, government and private sector for increased positive responses towards the health needs of Kenyans, HENNET program activities revolved around four main strategic objectives of information sharing, advocacy, capacity building and networking.

The HENNET Board, Steering Committee, Members and the Secretariat in a combined effort, worked hard towards achieving the HENNET objectives.

The highlights of the milestones achieved during the year under review are as follows;

**a) Communication and information sharing.**

HENNET has continued to be a link in information sharing between the different players in the health sector. HENNET has revamped its website [www.hennet.or.ke](http://www.hennet.or.ke) thanks to GIZ who supported the process both financially and technically to completion. The HENNET Website is continuously uploaded with relevant health operational publications and documents. The members are also given an opportunity to advertise positions in their organizations in the website as well as have conversations through the twitter handle.

Apart from the website, the Secretariat continues to inform members on goings on in the health sector to ensure their participation and active engagement at their various levels of operation. Inclusive in this is the launch of key documents like policies and strategies in the health sector including other documents launched by partners and other stakeholders thereby ensuring involvement of the CSOs. We have strived to reduce the flow of mails to twice a week from the Secretariat to the membership for ease of follow up and flow of new information.

According to its annual calendar of events, HENNET holds CEOs breakfast meetings bi-annually. These meetings are forums in which HENNET member CEOs come together to share experiences and get updates on progress made in the Network. Both the HENNET chairperson and Coordinator update member CEOs on the milestones achieved by the network and also table for discussions issues of interest to HENNET. Key strategic decisions which provide both governance and operational guidance to the board and the Secretariat are made in this forum.

During the year under review, HENNET held its bi – annual CEOs breakfast meetings. Amongst the issues discussed were the PBO amendment Bill and its implications on the operations of CSOs. It was discussed and agreed that HENNET would rally members to oppose the bill; participate in the consultation meetings at county level and develop a petition that will be delivered to the fact finding committee during the final day of consultations. During the two meetings, it was noted that participation of HENNET member organizations in both HENNET activities and the Ministries of Health led initiatives have significantly reduced. Low attendance of HENNET members’ quarterly meetings was cited and concerns were raised that this situation was likely to reduce the network’s effectiveness in fulfilling its mandate in the health sector.

Members discussed and agreed that there was need to maintain a strong network that can have meaningful influence in the Kenyan health sector. All members present at the meetings committed to improving participation and also promoting the network by becoming ambassadors of HENNET both within their organizations and when interacting with other stakeholders in the health sector

**b) Advocacy and Policy influencing**

The HENNET advocacy objective is to influence government policies, plans and programs for enhanced equity and social accountability. The current HENNET advocacy strategy ends this year (2015) and the process of developing a new one has already begun. Members will soon be asked to participate in this very important process.

In an effort to align to the constitution of 2010 and devolution of health, HENNET has embarked on forming county chapters. A total of 13 county chapters have been formed. HENNET continues to form county chapters and most recently the Bungoma county chapter was launched. I appeal to members to support the chapters and participate in its activities as HCSOs align themselves to this new important development in Kenya.

In the previous years participation in the Ministry of Health Initiatives was limited due to few staff at the secretariat. This is no longer the case as we have revived our membership in relevant committees and Technical working groups.

### **c) Capacity building**

In order to effectively work towards attaining its mission and meeting its obligations to network members, The Secretariat has committed to the following objectives;

- Building the capacity of Health Civil Societies (HCSOs) in advocacy skills to enable them demand for quality health services on behalf of the community
- Ensuring that HCSOs are well informed to actively participate in health sector activities, ensure that the activities are aligned to the overall sector plans, and are also positively responding to priorities of the sector
- Ensuring that the capacities of the HCSOs are adequately strengthened in order to provide better services to the community
- Building capacity of HCSOs to be able to effectively participate in the county forums

As a standard activity in its annual calendar, HENNET holds quarterly meetings in order to address the above objectives. During the year under review, the Secretariat had the four meetings which addressed different topical issues of importance to network members.

### **d) Networking and coordination**

HENNET continues to strengthen partnerships and networking in the health sector, bringing together the government, HCSOs and private partners in health together. These partnerships and networks provide opportunities for information sharing, identification of opportunities, strategic positioning for resources in the sector as well as capacity building.

HENNET's involvement in PPPs in Health has increased our involvement with the private sector to improve the health of Kenyans and ensure the engagement of the wider private sector in

improving health indicators in the country. HENNET in the year under review is now the secretariat to the PPPHK, a role which was approved by the Board. In this role HENNET has continued to support the PPPHK hold its meetings and their participation in overall health sector activities and discussions.

In the FY 2013/2014, HENNET worked closely with development partners on issues of common interest. These included the sharing of health sector information and processes. This has kept us informed of every process in the health sector, including knowledge of forums which we may not have been privy to and therefore allowing us to participate. The year has also seen the HENNET secretariat engage more in member activities on their invite and invitations to participate in CSO issues regionally and internationally for example GAVI CSO engagement.

#### **e) Internal systems strengthening**

HENNET Secretariat went through an institutional strengthening workshop supported and facilitated by GAVI. As a result HENNET now has a functional financial system.

#### **HENNET Funding**

The year under review has seen HENNET receive funding from GAVI and EU which will support some core functions of HENNET such as quarterly meetings and CEO meetings.

Members have continued to support HENNET resource mobilization in several ways such as inclusion in project proposals and supporting core activities of the secretariat specifically quarterly meetings.

The HENNET membership fee continues to be a source of revenue for the organization.

#### **CHALLENGES IN THE FINANCIAL YEAR 2008/2009**

Moving the HENNET agenda to the counties has continued to present a challenge. For greater and more meaningful participation of its members in health activities, HENNET has to continue advocating for establishment and strengthening of county chapters with clearly agreed upon mandate. Additionally, we have to find ways to get the system of member focal points to work better. The secretariat would therefore request that all the CEOs of organizations that are volunteering in the various counties to factor the additional duties in the staff's job description for ease of reporting and follow up.

Failure by members to respond to requests for information by the secretariat has also been a great challenge. This includes requests for data and responding to client satisfaction surveys .

We still have members who do not honor the commitments in committees and task forces. These are commitments we make and there is need to report back on any meetings that you attend on behalf of Hennet.

Finally, it is our responsibility as HENNET Members to spread word about HENNET in every sphere of our work. We encourage you to inform other CSOs in health to join HENNET so that we all speak with one strong voice.

## **LOOKING FORWARD**

The HENNET Strategic Plan implementation is on course. I urge individual members to commit to participation and engagement in the Network activities both as called for by our secretariat and communicated by the MOH. The current funding comes to an end at the end of the year but the Board should begin to think of other ways to fundraise and keep HENNET's agenda on the map, and especially now to operationalize the new constitution and the current strategic plan (2014-2018).

We plan to move various agendas forward namely; Participation in the Health sector partnership framework, Implementation of the HENNET Advocacy Strategy to name but a few.

HENNET is in a transition face again. We have shared a draft of desired competencies, and roles and responsibilities of the board members. Critical for the positions that are falling vacant is commitment to HENNET strategic objectives. The Steering Committee members are more the hands on group and must be willing to participate in the sector activities more often than the rest of the Board members.

Finally, I would like to thank all members of Hennet, my fellow Board members and Secretariat staff for the fulfilling and rewarding years that I have been part the HENNET Board as Chairperson. With a strong secretariat, committed Board and active members, I have no doubt that HENNET can only grow stronger.

We look forward to a successful 2014/2015 for HENNET. Let's uphold our vision of 'a healthy Kenyan society' and do whatever we can in words and in deed to ensure Kenyans enjoy the highest attainable standard of health in 2015/2016 and in the future.

**Thanks and God bless**

